

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listing, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-7. (Previously canceled)

8. (Currently amended) A piezoelectric actuator, comprising

- a piezoelectric element (2) for subjecting an actuating element (9) to a tensile force or compressive force, and a compensating element (3;20), the piezoelectric element (2) and the compensating element (3;20) having essentially the same coefficients of temperature expansion, wherein, the piezoelectric element (2) in its effective direction resting with one end against a fixation edge of a housing (6) via a spring (4) and with its other end on another fixation edge of the housing (6) via a pressure plate (8) and a prestressing spring (7), and

- a spring plate (5), which is disposed between the piezoelectric element (2) and the spring (4) and on which the compensating element (3;20) is additionally disposed, which with its other end abuts the housing (6) firmly and is located essentially parallel to the piezoelectric element (2),

- the piezoelectric element (2) and the compensating element (3;20) being

hollow cylinders, which are disposed about the axis of the actuating element (9), and wherein the piezoelectric actuator further comprises a heat-conducting paste disposed between the piezoelectric element (2) and the compensating element (3;20).

9. (Previously presented) The piezoelectric actuator of claim 8, wherein the piezoelectric element (2) comprises a multilayered structure of transversely disposed ceramic piezoelectric layers, which lengthen in the effective direction when an external electrical voltage is applied, and the compensating element (3) is constructed of ceramic.

10. (Previously presented) The piezoelectric actuator of claim 8, wherein the piezoelectric element (2) comprises a multilayered structure of transversely disposed ceramic piezoelectric layers, which lengthen in the effective direction when an external electrical voltage is applied; and that the compensating element (20) comprises longitudinally disposed piezoelectric layers, which shorten in the effective direction when an external electrical voltage is applied.

11. (Previously presented) The piezoelectric actuator of claim 8, wherein the piezoelectric element (2) and the compensating element (3; 20) are constructed in bar form, with a substantially round or rectangular cross section.

12. (Previously presented) The piezoelectric actuator of claim 9, wherein the piezoelectric element (2) and the compensating element (3; 20) are constructed in bar form, with a substantially round or rectangular cross section.

13. (Previously presented) The piezoelectric actuator of claim 10, wherein the piezoelectric element (2) and the compensating element (3; 20) are constructed in bar form, with a substantially round or rectangular cross section.

14. (Previously presented) The piezoelectric actuator of claim 8, wherein the end of piezoelectric element (2), by which it rests on the pressure plate (8), is disposed on the far side of the piezoelectric actuator (1) in terms of the effective direction, so that the useful force (F_u) of the piezoelectric actuator (1) is a tensile force.

15. (Previously presented) The piezoelectric actuator of claim 9, wherein the end of piezoelectric element (2), by which it rests on the pressure plate (8), is disposed on the far side of the piezoelectric actuator (1) in terms of the effective direction, so that the useful force (F_u) of the piezoelectric actuator (1) is a tensile force.

16. (Previously presented) The piezoelectric actuator of claim 10, wherein the end of piezoelectric element (2), by which it rests on the pressure plate (8), is

disposed on the far side of the piezoelectric actuator (1) in terms of the effective direction, so that the useful force (F_u) of the piezoelectric actuator (1) is a tensile force.

17. (Previously presented) The piezoelectric actuator of claim 11, wherein the end of piezoelectric element (2), by which it rests on the pressure plate (8), is disposed on the far side of the piezoelectric actuator (1) in terms of the effective direction, so that the useful force (F_u) of the piezoelectric actuator (1) is a tensile force.

18. (Previously presented) The piezoelectric actuator of claim 12, wherein the end of piezoelectric element (2), by which it rests on the pressure plate (8), is disposed on the far side of the piezoelectric actuator (1) in terms of the effective direction, so that the useful force (F_u) of the piezoelectric actuator (1) is a tensile force.

19. (Previously presented) The piezoelectric actuator of claim 13, wherein the end of piezoelectric element (2), by which it rests on the pressure plate (8), is disposed on the far side of the piezoelectric actuator (1) in terms of the effective direction, so that the useful force (F_u) of the piezoelectric actuator (1) is a tensile force.

20. (Previously presented) The piezoelectric actuator of claim 8, wherein the end of piezoelectric element (2), by which it rests on the pressure plate (8), is disposed on the side of the piezoelectric actuator (1) located in the effective direction, so that the useful force (F_u) of the piezoelectric actuator (1) is a compressive force.

21. (Previously presented) The piezoelectric actuator of claim 9, wherein the end of piezoelectric element (2), by which it rests on the pressure plate (8), is disposed on the side of the piezoelectric actuator (1) located in the effective direction, so that the useful force (F_u) of the piezoelectric actuator (1) is a compressive force.

22. (Previously presented) The piezoelectric actuator of claim 10, wherein the end of piezoelectric element (2), by which it rests on the pressure plate (8), is disposed on the side of the piezoelectric actuator (1) located in the effective direction, so that the useful force (F_u) of the piezoelectric actuator (1) is a compressive force.

23. (Previously presented) The piezoelectric actuator of claim 8, wherein the end of piezoelectric element (2), by which it rests on the pressure plate (8), is

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disposed on the side of the piezoelectric actuator (1) located in the effective direction, so that the useful force (F_u) of the piezoelectric actuator (1) is a compressive force.

Claim 24. (Canceled)